

Message Text

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ACTION SY-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SYE-00 /006 W
-----029856 302227Z /64
P 302130Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9431
AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 4569

DEPT FOR A/SY/FO, A/SY/PRS, A/SY/OPS/T; PANAMA FOR RSS/RTC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC
SUBJ: VEHICLE ACCIDENT, SY FOLLOW CAR

REF: SAN SALVADOR 4568

1. ON AUGUST 29 AT APPROXIMATELY 1730 HOURS, SY FOLLOW CAR RECEIVED EXTENSIVE DAMAGE AS A RESULT OF A COLLISION WHILE ESCORTING CHARGE.
 2. NO INJURIES WERE SUSTAINED BY SY PERSONNEL.
 3. REINFORCING OF EXISTING ARMOR IN FOLLOW CAR HAD BEEN COMPLETED THAT DAY (AUGUST 29) BY SEABEES FROM RTC PANAMA.
 4. IT IS THE POSITIVE OPINION OF THE AGENTS IN THE VEHICLE, AND OTHER QUALIFIED PERSONNEL, THAT WITHOUT THE ADDITIONAL PROTECTION OFFERED BY THE FOLLOWING MODIFICATIONS (PARA 8) PERSONAL INJURIES, POSSIBLY FATAL, WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFERED.
 5. HAD THIS BEEN A POSITIVE ATTACK THE FOLLOW CAR AND AGENTS WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO COMPLETE THEIR MISSION, AS THIS VEHICLE WAS STILL FULLY OPERABLE. THE IMPACTING VEHICLE WAS
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- IMMOBILIZED AND THE DRIVER INJURED.
6. BECAUSE OF INFORMATION RECENTLY RECEIVED DESCRIBING THE FOLLOW CAR AND STATING THAT IT MUST BE ELIMINATED, IT WAS DETERMINED THAT BETTER PROTECTION MUST BE GIVEN TO THE CAR AND AGENTS.

7. THE CAR HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN PARTIALLY PROTECTED WITH ALUMINUM IN THE DOORS AND BACK SEAT.

8. LEXAN WAS INSTALLED IN THE SIDE AND REAR WINDOWS, ALUMINUM WAS INSATALLED IN THE SAIL PANELS, TRUNK AND PARTS OF THE FLOOR. AS NO SANDBAGS WERE AVAILABLE IN SAN SALVADOR, POUCH BAGS WERE "BOROWWED", FILLED WITH SAND AND PLACED ON THE FLOOR AREA. GUN PORTS WERE CUT IN THE ALUMINUM DOOR PANELS SO THE AGENTS COULD ETURN FIRE.

9. THREE FACTORS PROVIDED THE ABILITY FOR THE CAR TO WITHSTAND THE IMPACT AND STILL BE OPERABLE.

A. SIDE ARMOR PREVENTED THE DOORS FROM FULLY COLLAPSING AND LETTING THE IMPACTING VEHICLE ENTER.

B. LEXAN WINDOWS PREVENTED FLYING GLASS WITHIN THE CAR.

C. THE MOST BENEFICIAL FACTOR PROVED TO BE THE EXTRA WEIGHT OF THE SANDBAGS IN THE BOTTOM OF THE CAR. THE LOW CENTER OF GRAVITY PREVENTED THE VEHICLE FROM ROLLING OVER.

THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE CAR LIFTED ABOUT TWO FEET ON IMPACT BUT WAS ABLE TO TRAVEL STRAIGHT FORWARD DURING THE ACCIDENT.

10. MAJOR DAMAGE HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIAL TO THE RIGHT DOORS,
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WINDSHIELD AND SIDE GLASS, THE FRAME IS APPARENTLY BENT AND CONNECTIONS WITHIN THE ENGINE AREA BROKEN, I.E. AIR CONDITIONER, WATER. THE VEHICLE WAS DRIVEN TO THE EMBASSY PARKING AREA WITHOUT PROBLEM.
LUBENSKY

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